



LAS NICAS and HOME LIFE

**A videotape
By Julia Lesage
about women
and daily life in
Nicaragua**

“LAS NICAS is about how women survive in the face of overwhelming force and pressures. The tape shows a discernible link between the country's survival and women's total emancipation. “This is a woman's revolution,” intones one woman as she vows to defend it at any cost. These women's obduracy accentuates the underlying strength of their commitment. Somoza's Nicaragua is littered with the blood and bones of innocent women and their children. The work offers an excellent tribute to the fallen and to the living who are determined not to have history repeat itself.

In **LAS NICAS** the women tell specific and graphic stories, but they speak as “women” and are not individualized. The tape also integrates folk music, popular music, and murals to show the people's artistic expression of these issues. The tape provides an alternative vision of history—the history of struggle, of women's oppression. In particular, since the oral tradition is a part of black lives and struggle here, these women's voices provide a context for understanding Nicaragua that U.S. minority women can specifically relate to.

HOME LIFE depicts the experiences of one Nicaraguan family in a way that provides an analogy to other underprivileged and peasant families in Latin America as well as elsewhere in the third world. The guest in the home, a U.S. minister, gains an education merely by living with and knowing this family. While the dominant press might portray the minister's “civilizing mission,” in this video we see the reverse taking place. The repository of Christian charity and endurance is a sturdy grandmother, full of humanity in a poor environment, a woman who survived horrid pogrom.

The tape lets the family relay the processes of their daily life, and it is affecting in its simplicity without ceremonizing or enervating the events or the people shown. A question constantly comes to the viewer's mind: Why such inhumane treatment? Why is anyone trying so hard to harm this family, these people of Nicaragua? ”

Teshome H. Gabriel—*author of Third Cinema in the Third World: The Aesthetics of Liberation; Professor of Film Studies and African Studies, UCLA.*

Sales and Rentals

LAS NICAS — 45 min., color
HOME LIFE — 27 min., color

1/2 in. videocassette format

Both programs on one tape.
Sale only
\$39.95—Individuals
\$59.95—Institutions
Specify VHS or Betamax

3/4 in. U-Matic videocassette format

Each program on separate tape.
Sale price, each—\$125.00
Rental price, for one week:
LAS NICAS—\$75.00
HOME LIFE—\$50.00

For Purchase, write:

Julia Lesage
2620 N. Richmond
Chicago, IL 60647
312/252-6616

For 3/4 in. Rental, write:

Video Data Bank
School of the Art Institute
280 S. Columbus Drive
Chicago, IL 60603
312/443-3793

Suggested Audiences

- Women's Studies
- Latin American Studies
- Anthropology
- Social Sciences
- Spanish Classes
- Solidarity Groups
- Community Showings
- Church Groups

Produced and
directed by
Julia Lesage

L A S N I C A S



"In **LAS NICAS** committed North American women provide impassioned interpretations of the struggles of Nicaraguan women. This comprehensive presentation reveals the depth of Nicaraguan women's struggle and determination as they work on a day to day basis to consolidate the revolution of which they have always been an integral and indispensable part."

Jesús Salvador Treviño—*independent filmmaker, works including Yo Soy Chicano, Raíces de Sangre and Seguin.*

"**LAS NICAS** is a collage of women's voices and images which together offer a collective memory of the last years of the Somoza regime and provide an insight into women's hopes and problems in contemporary Nicaragua. This view of the lives of Nicaraguan women offers a much needed alternative source of information from that current in the U.S. press and media.

Jean Franco—*Director, Latin American Studies Center, Columbia University.*

"**LAS NICAS** is an important record of the voices of Nicaraguan women. Using still photographs of family and work life, combined with wonderful music and natural sound effects, **LAS NICAS** lets us glimpse the universality of women's grievances along with the optimism and hope the revolution has inspired in Nicaraguan women."

Freude Bartlett—*filmmaker; founder and director of Serious Business Company for distributing independent films.*

"The producers have striven, they say, 'to find an aesthetic form that would follow in the tradition of feminist art in the U.S. and achieve a cross-cultural translation of women's experiences in Nicaragua.' Ambitious as this project is, they have succeeded remarkably."

Elayne Rapping, *The Guardian* (Ap. 18, 1985).

Place:

Time:

Date:

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LAS NICAS

In 1981 and 1982, Carole Isaacs and Julia Lesage visited Nicaragua and did in-depth interviews with women in the Managua area. Here Nicaraguan women speak about the topics of work, sexual politics, religion, family life, children, social participation and defense.

45 minutes, English (Spanish-language version available 1986)
Script, photography, interviews—Carole Isaacs and Julia Lesage
Video, direction—Julia Lesage

HOME LIFE

HOME LIFE was shot in Esteli, Nicaragua, in August, 1984. It is a city midway between Managua and the Honduran border whose people acutely feel the impact of U.S. supported contra raids. Videomakers Julia Lesage and Chuck Kleinhans and Seattle-based minister Randall Mullins lived with the people of Esteli for five weeks, and Randall made this tape with the Diaz family to introduce to his parish back home the Nicaraguan family whose life and love he shared.

27 minutes, bilingual. Camera—Chuck Kleinhans. Direction, translation—Julia Lesage

"HOME LIFE provides a slice of life of a North American's experience in the revolutionary society. Probing questions reveal how the average Nicaraguan worker and campesino have had a much different life since Somoza and the triumph of the revolution."

Jesús Salvador Treviño—*independent filmmaker, works including Yo Soy Chicano, Raíces de Sangre and Seguin.*

"HOME LIFE is a superb example of how video can build bridges between people. It also brings home the reality of the Nicaragua which the U.S. government is trying to destroy, and it counters in the most directly human way the disinformation emerging from Washington. It deserves the widest possible audience."

Joel Kovel — *psychoanalyst, author of The Age of Desire and Against the State of Nuclear Terror.*

"HOME LIFE is an exquisite example of what small format/low tech video can do: give an intimate view of daily life without voyeurism or the distorted media performances which lights and large crews usually elicit. Here is a sharing of experiences in a war-torn land. It offers a close look at the direct effect of our government's policies. It should be seen by all U.S. citizens."

DeeDee Halleck — *media activist, producer of Waiting for the Invasion and Paper Tiger Television.*

What is everyday life like in contemporary Nicaragua? **HOME LIFE** allows us to share the memories and day to day experiences of a family from Esteli, near the embattled zone of contra raids."

Jean Franco—*Director, Latin American Studies Center, Columbia University.*

"LAS NICAS and HOME LIFE return me to the reality of Nicaragua, particularly the courage of the women. These programs are most useful tools for church and community study groups. They help people here understand the revolutionary process of a free Nicaragua as told through the lives of women and a Nicaraguan family. These tapes clearly convey the movement in Nicaraguans' lives from the tyranny of Somoza to revolutionary hope."

Sister Marjorie Tuite, O.P.—*National Coordinator of National Assembly of Religious Women; Director for Ecumenical Citizen Action, Church Women United.*

On How To Use The Tapes

Many schools, cultural centers and churches have special rooms for showing videos to large groups of people. Find out what kind of videocassettes they show—VHS or Betamax 1/2 in. format, or 3/4 in. format. If they do not have a video player, you can easily rent one at a local video store for about \$10. Also you can contact your local cable and public television stations and ask them if they would be interested in screening the video for a future airing. There are many smaller local stations with a lot of air time which they are looking to fill with new and interesting material. If your school buys a tape, you may want to inform teachers in various disciplines about its usefulness and availability, and if you buy one, you may want to leave it in a local solidarity office or radical or feminist bookstore (or make copies to leave in those places) so that it will have wider circulation.

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